



SOLANO COUNTY TRANSIT
Board Minutes for Meeting of
May 24, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patterson called the meeting of the SolTrans Board to order at 4:05 pm. A quorum was confirmed.

MEMBERS

PRESENT:	Elizabeth Patterson, Mayor	City of Benicia, Chair
	Erin Hannigan, Vice Mayor	City of Vallejo, Vice Chair
	Mark Hughes, Councilmember	City of Benicia
	Osby Davis, Mayor	City of Vallejo
	Jim Spering, Supervisor, County of Solano	MTC Representative
	Harry Price, Mayor	City of Vallejo, Chair
		Ex-Officio – STA Representative

MEMBERS None.
ABSENT:

STAFF

PRESENT:	<i>In Alphabetical Order by Last Name:</i>	
	Greg Anderson	SolTrans Director of Administrative Services
	Bernadette Curry	SolTrans Legal Counsel
	Suzanne Fredriksen	SolTrans Clerk of the Board
	Jim McElroy	SolTrans Interim Executive Director
	Nancy Whelan	SolTrans Interim Chief Financial Officer
	Jeanine Wooley	SolTrans Director of Operations

OTHERS

PRESENT:	<i>In Alphabetical Order by Last Name:</i>	
	Mona Babauta	Fairfield and Suisun Transit (FAST)
	Dafni Bangad	MV Transportation
	Richard Burnett	MTC Policy Advisory Committee
	James Cook	SolTrans Public Advisory Committee
	Linda Durham	
	Daryl Halls	Solano Transportation Authority
	Jackie Lane	MV Transportation
	Ed Nash	

Liz Niedziela
Dan Smith
Joyce Williams
Ricky Williams
Yvonne Williams

Solano Transportation Authority

MV Transportation
Amalgamated Transit Union

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion by Board Member Hughes, and a second by Board Member Spering, the SolTrans JPA Board approved the agenda.

A quorum was confirmed by the Clerk of the Board. There was no Statement of Conflict declared at this time.

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

None presented.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF

5. Report from the Executive Director

CONSENT CALENDAR

On a motion by Board Member Spering, and a second by Board Member Hughes, the SolTrans JPA Board approved Consent Calendar Items 6a through 6f, with the exception to pull the following for discussion:

- Item 6d. Authorization to Submit a Request to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for Lifeline Transportation Program Funding
- Item 6e. Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transit Assistance Funds (STAF), and Regional Measures 2 (RM2) Claims

6a. Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2012

Recommendation:

Approve the meeting minutes of April 19, 2012.

6b. Public Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of May 2, 2012

Recommendation:

Approve the meeting minutes of May 2, 2012.

6c. Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of May 3, 2012

Recommendation:

Approve the meeting minutes of May 3, 2012.

6d. Authorization to Submit a Request to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for Lifeline Transportation Program Funding

Recommendation:

Adopt Resolution No. 2012-02 authorizing a request from SolTrans to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for Lifeline Program Funding.

Staff Comments:

Nancy Whelan noted that Attachment A to the Resolution had been revised to include additional funding through STA for sustaining span of service.

On a motion by Board Member Spering and a second by Board Member Hughes, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation to include the revisions to Attachment A.

6e. Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transit Assistance Funds (STAF) and Regional Measure 2 (RM2) Claims

Recommendation:

1. Authorize SolTrans Executive Director or his/her designee to submit SolTrans FY 2012-13 allocation request for TDA funds in the amount of \$4,711,866; and STAF in the amount of ~~\$576,842~~ ***\$1,133,707***.
2. Authorize SolTrans Executive Director or his/her designee to submit SolTrans FY 2012-13 allocation request for RM2 funds in the amount of \$1,223,840.

Staff Comments:

Nancy Whelan noted that the recommendation had been revised to include additional STAF funds.

On a motion by Board Member Davis and a second by Board Member Hughes, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation to include the revisions, shown above in ~~strikethrough~~ ***bold italics***.

6f. Fuel Budget and Contracting Methods

Recommendation:

Continue practice of low bid procurements for fuel.

REGULAR CALENDAR

7. Service Modifications/Fare Restructure Proposal

Jeanine Wooley provided a summary of supplemental data which staff collected and analyzed in response to Board direction at the April 19th Board meeting to reconsider the proposed monthly pass rate, consider reinstating the Walnut Creek stop on Route 78 while eliminating the Pleasant Hill stop, and to consider options for reinstating some level of Sunday service. She noted that staff assessed services originally proposed for elimination, as well as routes that could potentially be impacted as a result of shifting service to restore other services.

Public Comments:

Carter Cruise expressed concern regarding Benicia subscription service, bus service to and from Contra Costa County and Vallejo, and the bus service to Fairfield from Vallejo.

Daryl Halls, Executive Director of Solano Transportation Authority (STA), commended staff for a job well done under extremely difficult circumstances. He indicated that Route 78 should be monitored approximately 6 months after the changes are implemented due to the fact that the Route is not currently meeting the 20% fairbox recovery. He noted that if the implemented changes do not result in an increase in ridership, the Route's performance challenges could jeopardize funding.

Ed Nash requested additional information regarding the degree to which the service changes would affect employees of SolTrans.

Jim McElroy, SolTrans Interim Executive Director, noted that SolTrans staff has been working closely with its transit operator in anticipation of the changes. He noted that it appears that the transit operator has held back in hiring additional employees in order to minimize impact upon employees.

Fergie Owens requested additional information regarding the span of service in the evening hours. She also requested better communication with riders in the future.

Jeanine Wooley, SolTrans Director of Operations, noted that the span of service was increased on the routes most utilized by riders to connect to commuter buses. She further stated that increased communication with the riders would be implemented in the coming weeks.

James Cook described a supplemental Route 75 which he believes would represent Benicia riders in a positive way.

Jim McElroy expressed appreciation for James Cook's exceptional work. He noted that the proposed route had been added into staff's planning process for evaluating new routes and services for cost effectiveness, performance, and potential success, and that Route 75 would be the first test case.

Board Comments:

Vice Chair Hannigan commended Jeanine Wooley and her team for a robust public outreach process which included multiple meetings in various locations and at different times of the day. She noted that staff's revised recommendation was representative of a balanced approach within the constraints of limited resources. She requested an on-time performance review to be added to staff's recommendation for implementation.

Board Member Hughes expressed appreciation to staff for taking Board member and public comments to heart, particularly noting the addition of 3 trips to Diablo Valley College (DVC).

Board Member Davis commended the public for their input at the April Board meeting and concurred with Board Member Hughes' commendation of staff's efforts.

Chair Patterson concurred with Board Member Davis' appreciation of the public hearing and noted the fairness of the solutions that staff subsequently provided. She proposed additions to the staff's recommendation to include the planned implementation campaign from Agenda Item 14 in the Board approval; as well as a quarterly assessment of ridership statistics, which specifies on-time performance measures and a review of Route 78 performance measures.

Recommendation:

Authorize staff to implement 17,000 annual hours in service cuts with the following modifications to the plan presented at the May 2012 Board meeting:

- a. Restoration of the Walnut Creek BART stop on the Route 78
- b. Elimination of the Pleasant Hill BART stop on the Route 78
- c. Retain limited service to Diablo Valley College by modification to selected trips on Route 78, as determined by staff
- d. Restoration of limited Sunday service through limited reductions in selected off-peak weekday service, as determined by staff

Further, authorize restoration of approximately 1,456 hours of selected early morning and evening trips, as determined by staff, pending receipt of expected one-time grant funds specifically dedicated for said purposes, therefore revising total reductions from 17,000 annual hours to about 15,544 annual hours for purpose of connecting to jobs as directed by previous Board action.

Finally, authorize staff to implement said modifications on about July 1, 2012, but with actual date to be determined by staff based on operating and customer considerations *with direction to return quarterly to the Board with a report assessing system-wide on-time performance as well as a performance evaluation of Route 78. The implementation plan shall include an aggressive campaign for communicating the service changes to the public as outlined in Agenda Item 14 – Service Change Marketing and Outreach.*

On a motion by Board Member Hughes and a second by Vice Chair Hannigan, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation as amended, shown above in *bold italics*.

8. Adopt Base 2012/2013 Fare Structure with Modified Unified Monthly Regional Pass Rate

Jim McElroy reviewed the revenue neutral fare structure approach for 2012/2013 as supported by the Board adopted Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP). He stated that the goal for 2012/2013 should be to simplify and harmonize the fare structure, which was very complex under the previous systems, and to defer a revenue-positive approach to fare setting for the 2013/2014 budget cycle. He provided an analysis of projected outcomes, including potential loss if the monthly pass rate were set to \$100 and a potential income increase if the monthly pass rate were set to \$118. He noted that a more refined analysis of the originally proposed fare structure for 2012/2013 led staff to recommend increasing the originally proposed unified monthly pass rate from \$100 to \$114.

Public Comments:

Daryl Halls concurred with staff's recommendation regarding the fare structure, and noted that staff is working on strategies for incentives in order to attract additional riders.

Board Comments:

Vice Chair Hannigan expressed concern that the agency may lose ridership if the fare is \$114 versus \$100. She requested additional information regarding the percentages of riders who currently pay \$90 as opposed to \$118.

Jim McElroy noted that current financial data shows that roughly 90% of riders pay \$118.

Vice Chair Hannigan noted that she would support staff's recommendation.

Board Member Sperling concurred and indicated that he would not be in support of lowering the fare to \$100 in favor of providing better service.

Recommendation:

Adopt base 2012/2013 fare structure as proposed at the Board meeting of April 19, 2012, modified to increase the proposed unified regional pass rate from \$100/month to \$114/month.

On a motion by Vice Chair Hannigan and a second by Board Member Sperling, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation.

9. FY 2012-13 Operating Budget

Nancy Whelan provided an overview of the operating budget, noting its key organizational components: fixed route bus service, paratransit service, and the taxi scrip program. She described key features of the budget as they relate to achieving a sustainable service, including a proposed reduction in service hours, service contract savings, fares and fare revenue, and one time transition costs. She highlighted key assumptions which are expected to affect revenues and expenditures in 2012-13.

Public Comments:

Yvonne Williams noted that the Administrative costs appeared to have increased. She requested additional information regarding whether staff had considered cutting Administrative costs.

Nancy Whelan, Interim Chief Financial Officer, stated that utilities and professional services were included in the General Administrative costs, whereas previously they were budgeted under a different category. She noted that this change in how the two items are budgeted caused the increase that is shown in the General Administrative costs.

Daryl Halls explained the status of marketing funds and recommended that a communication plan item be added to the June Board agenda.

Board Comments:

Chair Patterson requested that the General Administrative costs be broken down by category for the next Budget Report so that it is easier for people to understand.

Board Member Hughes requested additional information regarding a contingency plan in the event that the service changes do not produce the optimistic results reflected in the budget.

Nancy Whelan noted that the one-time transition costs will provide a contingency plan, if necessary.

Board Member Sperling proposed that footnotes be added to Attachment B - General Administrative Expenses, to reflect the utilities and professional services included in the shared administrative costs.

Chair Patterson noted that while staff is committed to closely monitoring the system through the implementation, the budget approach is also a conservative one in that it doesn't take into consideration the current trends in the transit world towards increased ridership.

Recommendation:

- A. Approve the FY 2012-13 operating budget in the amount of \$11,504,997, reflecting service restructuring and fare harmonization.
- B. Direct staff to return to the Board to consider a budget amendment for one-time transition costs when the impacts of service and fare restructuring are fully assessed.

On a motion by Board Member Spering and a second by Vice Chair Hannigan, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation.

10. Consider approval of Employment Agreement for SolTrans General Manager

Bernadette Curry summarized the SolTrans General Manager recruitment process, noting that the Board had selected Mona Babauta to be the first General Manager of SolTrans. She stated that the proposed Employment Agreement was negotiated under the direction and leadership of the Personnel Subcommittee.

Public Comments:

Mona Babauta congratulated SolTrans staff for successfully placing the agency on level ground.

Board Comments:

Chair Patterson commended Mona Babauta for her graciousness during the hiring process.

Board Member Price concurred and applauded Mona Babauta for her work with Fairfield and Suisun Transit (FAST) in establishing ridership confidence in public transit.

Recommendation:

Appoint Mona Babauta to be the new SolTrans General Manager and authorize the Chair to execute a General Manager Employment Agreement for this position.

After discussion, the SolTrans JPA Board amended the General Manager Employment Agreement, clause 3 - Performance Evaluation as follows:

“To ensure effective communication about expectations and performance, within three months from the date of execution of this Agreement, General Manager and Board will establish performance measures by which General Manager’s performance will be initially evaluated. The Board will review General Manager’s performance within six months of the establishing of performance measures. Thereafter, ~~the Board will conduct and complete a performance evaluation during April of each year~~ *in March of each year, the General Manager will place her performance evaluation on the Board’s agenda, which the Board will complete in April.* The annual performance evaluation will incorporate the parties’ mutually determined specific goals and performance objectives that are necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the SolTrans and for the attainment of the Board’s objectives, and the parties will further establish a relative priority among those goals and performance objectives and address any merit increases to General Manager’s base salary as warranted by such performance review...” (page 3)

On a motion by Board Member Spering and a second by Board Member Hughes, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation to include the amendment to the General Manager Employment Agreement, shown above in ~~strikethrough~~ ***bold italics***.

11. Update on Curtola/Lemon Park & Ride Expansion and Authorize Direct Cost Agreement with COV for Project Management

Jim McElroy provided background information regarding the Curtola/Lemon Park & Ride Expansion project, noting that SolTrans recently signed an agreement with the City of Vallejo (COV) to transfer certain real property including the Curtola Facility. He highlighted key outcomes of a recent meeting between COV, SolTrans, Solano Transportation Authority (STA), and COV consultant, Stantec. He stated that the group informally agreed that the current design proposals do not deliver the key components essential to funding commitments within available or anticipated financial resources. He noted that STA is engaging in a study to consider Public-Private Partnership (P3) opportunities for projects such as the Curtola expansion.

Public Comments:

None presented.

Board Member Comments:

Chair Patterson suggested that staff examine opportunities for funding through the Cap-and-Trade Auction Program.

Daryl Halls noted that Cap-and-Trade could be a potential funding source; however whether or not transit can take part in it has yet to be determined. He stated that the primary goal currently is to get the project shelf-ready.

Recommendation:

Authorize the Executive Director to sign a direct cost agreement, as drafted by SolTrans Legal Counsel, with the City of Vallejo to continue project management of the Curtola Park and Ride Facility expansion.

On a motion by Board Member Spering and a second by Board Member Hughes, the SolTrans JPA Board unanimously approved the recommendation.

INFORMATIONAL – NO DISCUSSION

12. Bus Industry Request for Information

13. Security at Curtola/Lemon Park & Ride Facility

14. Service Change Marketing and Outreach

15. BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Chair Patterson commended Jim McElroy for his leadership and guidance during SolTrans' inaugural first year and presented him with a Proclamation, noting key milestones achieved.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 p.m. The next regular meeting of the SolTrans Board is *tentatively* scheduled for **Thursday, June 21, 2012, 4:00 p.m., Vallejo Council Chambers.**

Attested by:



Suzanne Fredriksen
Clerk of the Board

5/25/2012

Date